

**Fairfield Cares** : A member of the **Fairfield County Alliance to Prevent Substance Abuse**; a **community collaboration** among town, schools, parents, business, law enforcement, clergy and other youth serving organizations working together and sharing ideas

Positive Directions \* 420 Post Road W Westport, CT 06880 \* [www.positivedirections.org](http://www.positivedirections.org)

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## INFO BRIEF\*\*\*FAIRFIELD CARES\*\*\*POSITIVE DIRECTIONS

### PRIORITY PROBLEM: UNDERAGE DRINKING

The coalition conducted a community needs assessment and identified 2 risk factors as having the greatest impact in Fairfield: 1) **family norms** –parents were not sending a clear message about disapproval of teen alcohol use 2) **peer norms**– unrealistic perception of peer alcohol use; life has a sense of purpose; maintenance of good health is important. During the course of the grant cycle Marijuana was identified as an additional area of focus.

### About Fairfield (2011 CERC ; Fairfield Public Schools)

- 30 square miles; Population: 59,078
- Average HHI : \$118,476
- 5400 children aged 12-18 attending 3 middle and 2 public high schools
- Home to both Fairfield and Sacred Heart Universities with approximately 8,000 undergraduate students

### Focus on Parents :

- Increase awareness of the negative effects of alcohol and marijuana on the developing teenage brain.
- Increase awareness of the social hosting laws concerning liability of underage drinking in the home.
- Increase resources available to help parents foster strong lines of communication with their children and communicate **the power of parental influence regarding their children's choices**.

### Strategies:

- Implement a **parent survey** to better understand perceptions and opinions regarding UAD in Fairfield; continue **student surveys** followed by results presentations.
- **9** Focus groups (teens & adults), **14** speaker/educational events distributing **5000** pieces of printed material, e newsletters circulated to **1000** people/month, **3 year** social norms campaign **You're not the only one** – prom-time postcards sent to **2000** homes/year. Posters in **17** liquor stores reminding parents **not to be a party to teenage drinking**.

Fairfield Cares was designated the official **Local Prevention Council** by Fairfield's First Selectman in the spring of 2013. **New logo** and **Facebook page** under development. We continue to refine our message and look for ways to promote healthy decision making by our youth.

### Our Success to date

<u>Performance Targets</u> <u>Youth</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Improved</u> <u>Outcomes</u>
Past 30-day use age 12-18	38 %	27%	✓
Perception of Harm	32%	69%	✓
Perception of parental disapproval	71%	86%	✓
Avg. Age of first use	14%	13%	-
Past 2 week binge drinking	23%	14%	✓
Life has sense of purpose	69%	72%	✓
Good health is important	63%	68%	✓
<u>Parents</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2014</u>	
Awareness of Social Host Law	67%	83%	✓
Definite family rules discouraging drinking	78%	81%	✓

\*\*RYASAP has been collecting survey data at 3 year intervals with Positive Directions implementing the **1st EVER Parent Survey in 2010 ; 2014** results just in.

**Focus on Youth (ages 12-18)** \* Reduce past 30-day alcohol use  
 \*increase perception of harm and youth perception of parental disapproval.  
**Strategies:** \*Youth surveys (2014 scheduled for early May) \* social norms campaign – in coordination with the schools' guidance departments & health classes \* posters in the 3 middle & 2 high schools promoting the message: **You're not the only one** if you choose not to drink or use marijuana. \*Freshman Forum on UAD reached over 3,000 students and parents.

**Looking Ahead** \*\*Youth and Parents to be surveyed *regularly* \*\*More programs that encourage family connections and communication as a pathway to prevention \*\*Teen stress & anxiety from over-scheduling and pressure to succeed - an important part of the prevention conversation.

**Enable Underage Thinking**